

Communities in Action for Asthma Friendly Environments
EPA Office of Radiation and Indoor Air

Geographic location or area of activity: National project. Currently, more than 20 communities from across the US, and the organizations that support them, are participating.

Description of activity: The Indoor Environments Division of the Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) strives to improve the health of people with asthma by collaborating with a variety of stakeholders, including health care providers, commercial and public health insurers, state agencies, child care and school personnel, community-based organizations and coalitions.

The Communities in Action for Asthma Friendly Environment (Communities in Action) Project is aimed at enlisting 1000 communities and the organizations that support them to deliver quality asthma care and improve health outcomes for millions of people dealing with asthma. The framework that supports Communities in Action includes an on-line Network (AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org) and an annual pacing event, the National Asthma Forum held in Washington DC in May, Asthma Awareness Month. Regional events are held throughout the year to provide local education, outreach, and benchmarking opportunities.

More than 220 communities are currently participating in the on-line Network. More than 300 individuals attend the annual National Asthma Forum. They are supporting each other with ideas and resources and they are sharing remarkable stories about the impacts they are having in their communities. Many of these efforts are focused on providing asthma care in urban settings, where asthma disparities are acute and environmental risk is high.

Interagency partners: This project involves offices within EPA that focus on environmental aspects of asthma, and all 10 Regions. Federal partners include the Centers for Disease Control and their funded state partners, the Surgeon General's Office, and the National Institutes of Health.

Local partners: Local partners throughout the United States are involved as "Mentors". These include: The Cambridge Health Alliance's Planned Care Program (Cambridge, MA), The Asthma Network of Western Michigan (Grand Rapids, MI), The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Community Asthma prevention Program (Philadelphia, PA), The New York City Asthma Initiative (New York, NY) and Monroe Plan's Improving Asthma Care for Children Program (Rochester, NY) among others. The University of Michigan, School of Public Health Asthma Health Outcomes Project conducted landmark research that provided the foundation for this project. The American Lung Association, National Association of School Nurses, America's Health Insurance Plans, National Environmental Education Foundation, and Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America are nonprofit partners.

Activity URL: <http://www.asthmacommunitynetwork.org/Default.aspx>



Urban Health Plan (UHP), an active member of Communities in Action, serves families in the Bronx, New York, where 27% of children have an asthma diagnosis, more than three times the national prevalence. UHP's strong ties to the community they serve, their partnerships with other organizations, and the integrated health care and environmental services that UHP delivers to their patients with asthma are making a real difference.